

## **23 Tips to Keep in Mind and Put to Use**

Kids and drugs: It can be an overwhelming issue to deal with—but it doesn't have to be. All you really need to begin are the 23 easy tips on this page. Put them into practice and your kids will reap the rewards of healthy, drug-free lives.

1. Be your kids' greatest fan. Compliment them on all of their efforts, the strength of their character, and their individuality.
2. Get your kids involved in adult-supervised after-school activities. Ask them what types of activities they're interested in and contact the school principal or guidance counselor to find out what activities are available for your child. Sometimes it takes a bit of experimenting to find out which activities your kids are best suited for, but it's worth the effort—feeling competent makes kids much less likely to use drugs.
3. Help your kids develop tools they can use to get out of Alcohol or other drug related situations. Let them know they can use you as an excuse: "My mom would kill me if I drank a beer!"
4. Get to know your children's friends and their parents. Set appointments for yourself to call them and check-in to make sure they share your views on alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Steer your kids away from any friends who use drugs.
5. Call kids' parents if their home is to be used for a party. Make sure that the party will be alcohol-free and supervised by adults.
6. Set curfews and enforce them. Let kids know the consequences of breaking curfew.
7. Encourage open dialogue with your children about their experiences. Make sure your children understand that they can ask you anything—and that you'll give them an honest answer.
8. Set a no-use rule for alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
9. Sit down for dinner with your children at least once a week. Use the time to talk—don't eat in front of the TV.
10. Make, and enforce, clear rules.
11. You don't need a lot of rules, but consistently enforce a small number of them with mild, not severe, consequences.
12. Show you care enormously about the choices your children make about drugs.

13. Plan regular parent-child activities that both of you enjoy.
14. Emphasize the things your children do right instead of only focusing on what's wrong.
15. If you abuse alcohol or other drugs, seek professional help.
16. Talk early and often about drugs, especially about the consequences of using them.
17. Talk with your children about the things that are important to them every day.
18. Really listen to your children.
19. Take advantage of everyday "teachable moments" to discuss drugs.
20. Arrange to have your children looked after or involved in activities from 3-5 p.m., the time most trouble occurs.
21. Make sure children who are unattended for periods during the day feel your presence by leaving them notes and talking to them on the phone.
22. Make it easy for your child to leave a place where drugs are being used by offering to pick them up anytime.
23. Be involved in your children's lives and make sure to have fun with them.

Source: Drug Free America

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